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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicants: Osama MOSELHI; and Tariq SHEHAB-ELDEEN  
Serial No.: 09/990,572  
Filing date: November 23, 2001  
Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR THE AUTOMATED  
DETECTION AND CLASSIFICATION OF DEFECTS IN  
SEWER PIPES  
Examiner: Not yet assigned  
Group Art Unit: 3673  
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COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS,  
Washington, D.C. 20231,  
U.S.A.

**VOLUNTARY AND PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Sir:

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 1 to 3 presently on file and add new claims 4 to 39 as follows:

4. (new) A method for detecting a plurality of defects in an item under inspection comprising:

acquiring at least one image of said item;

providing a plurality of neural networks, at least one of said plurality of neural networks corresponding to each one of said plurality of defects to be detected;

processing said at least one image to produce a processed image having objects isolated from an image background of said image; and

inputting said processed image into said plurality of neural networks to obtain information concerning corresponding defects.

5. (new) A method as claimed in claim 4, further comprising issuing a report using said information concerning said defects.